

# Brethren Evangelist

"I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life."—Jesus

VOLUME XXIV.

ASHLAND, O., WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4, 1902.

No. 23.

## Editorial

### The Flight of Years

How swift is time to the aged ; how slow to the young. When all the sensations of life are sweet, when every moment is crowded with delight, when youthful bouancy and vigor defy adversity and pain, when the rosy hours are incoming argosies of delights, friendly Time lingers along the way, and the years appear to be joy laden ages. But when age comes with its sorrow and burdens, its weariness of the world, its weakness and pain, the years fledge new wings and fly in quick succession into the lost eternities. They hurry us on toward the rest that remaineth, and toward the new life which dawns beyond the darkness like the rising of a brighter day. In this is a great mercy. The temptation and the pain will soon be past. "Yet a little while," and all this sorrowful experience will be but as a dream in the night. Some one has said that in heaven the sensation of time may be like the sensation of distance to an angel's wing, that we shall compass ages as if they were only minutes. This can not be. We will be young there, and every hour, crowded as they will be with inexpressible delights, will be a lingering eternity of blessedness and joy.

### A Sudden Conversion

It is sometimes spoken against. You hear people say it will not last. Perhaps the illustration we have in mind bears out this opinion. The Lord came to Peter to wash his feet.

"Thou shalt never wash my feet."

"If I wash thee not thou hast no part with me."

"Lord, not my feet only, but also hands and head."

Short dialog; lightning change of mind; quick conversion, going considerably beyond the divine demand, and followed within twenty-four hours by three denials of his Lord with cursing and swearing. Such was Peter.

There must have been something wrong about that conversion, that instantaneous change of attitude. He submits to the washing instantly so that he might have "part" with his Master, yet at the very first opportunity to have "part" or fellowship, with him, comes the threefold denial. Perhaps his comprehension penetrated no deeper than the external rite. Those who get no farther, or see no farther, than the manual performance of a religious ceremony merely touch the surface of the matter. Tho the Lord himself washed Peter's feet that night, he remained the same old Peter. The efficacy was not in the act, to which Peter

submitted, but in the idea, which Peter missed. Set that down. You will find it useful when you go to baptisms, and washings, and lovefeasts, and other outward ceremonials pertaining to the sanctuary.

Now let us see how easy it was for Peter to miss the idea, and how easily we may miss it. Note the Lord's language: "If I wash *thee* not." Observe where we put the emphasis. Because Peter had only objected specifically to the washing of his *feet*, we have gone on interpreting the Lord's reply as referring alone, or principally, to footwashing. But a man's feet are not the man, neither are his hands nor his head, nor all of them put together. Add the whole body, and yet you have hardly so much as touched the man, you have as yet hardly so much as scratched the "THEE". Behind, within, hidden away and out of sight, is the real man, the ego, the spirit, mind, soul, which are the THEE. It is this whole man, this inner life which we call character, this mind, spirit, soul, which sin renders unclean, and must be washed.

There are other ideas in the rite of footwashing besides spiritual cleansing, and there are other ideas in the washing of baptism, but no other idea more prominent or more important than this one which the application of pure water so vividly and fitly symbolizes. Why? Because the unclean shall not be found on the highway of holiness. (Isaiah 35 : 8.) Because no unclean person shall have any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ or of God. (Eph. 5 : 5.) Because, because,—why there are any number of reasons. Is there anything beneath the long suffering skies more loathesome than an unclean man or woman? A man for example who is unclean in speech, unclean in thought, unclean in life, is it possible to find anything, whether creeping thing, or reptile, or beast, more abominable? Do you wonder that such as these must be washed before they can have part with Christ? Do you not hear him saying to such as these: "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me?" And should not his preachers repeat this solemn message to all the unclean in life and character, whether in the church or out of it? If I wash thee not; if I WASH thee not; if I wash THEE not; if I wash thee NOT,—thou hast no PART with ME.

We and others besides have seen sudden conversions to footwashing and trine immersion which in the long run were not ornaments to religion. Water only goes skin deep, hardly that. But what these washings *signify*, the *idea* which is hid in them, goes *soul deep*. However unclean a man may be, that inner washing will make him fit to be the guest of an archangel. Let Christ wash *thee* and thou wilt have part with him in the heavenly inheritance, the eternal life, the golden Jerusalem, the company of angels.